
Shropshire Partnership External Funding Strategy

Shropshire is a large and predominantly rural county, with a population of 287,900 stretching across 600 settlements and many isolated dwellings. Delivering services and creating opportunities for all across such a sparsely populated area is complex and costly. This is why Shropshire Partnership recognises the importance external funding can have in helping to achieve our vision of ***'improving significantly the quality of life for Shropshire people'***.

While the County has a good record of securing external funding, with around £100 million gained in the last six years, we must not take the availability of external funding for granted because the arena is changing rapidly.

This Strategy seeks to ensure that the Partnership maximises the external funding opportunities available to Shropshire organisations and communities, to support the delivery of the Shropshire Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement, whilst raising the profile of the County's needs and priorities at a regional, national and European level.

The objectives of the strategy are to:

1. Influence Government and other funders for the benefit of Shropshire
 2. Maximise the amount of external funding entering Shropshire
 3. Enhance the delivery of externally-funded projects and programmes
 4. Increase the percentage of successful applications
 5. Reduce duplication of effort
 6. Improve efficiency and manage resources better
 7. Build on the collective knowledge and expertise in the external funding field
 8. Highlight the importance external funding plays in helping to deliver LSP priorities
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1 CONTEXT

1a What is External Funding?

For the purpose of this Strategy, External Funding is that which is:

- Over and above government allocations (i.e. mainstream funding)
- Actively sought and applied for
- Secured through a competitive process
- Awarded for specific proposals

It cannot generally support the delivery of statutory services.

1b Scope

In recognition of the importance of external funding and in response to emerging and potential significant changes, the Shropshire Partnership Management Group approved proposals for developing a Partnership External Funding Strategy in March 2006.

The purpose of the Strategy is to help Shropshire Partnership and its partners plan the next stage in its activity in accessing external funding. To do this, it will provide a clear steer, through recommendations and guidance, to partnership groups and partners from all sectors on all aspects of external funding.

The Strategy comprises of the following sections:

2. Setting the Scene - the impact of past programmes and future trends in External Funding

3. Regional Representation - Partnership engagement with regional groups and organisations involved in the distribution of external funding

4. Maximising External Funding - good practice guidance for partners applying for funding in line with Shropshire's strategic priorities and support in improving their own systems, promoting joined up thinking to get the best for Shropshire from external funding.

5. Conclusion

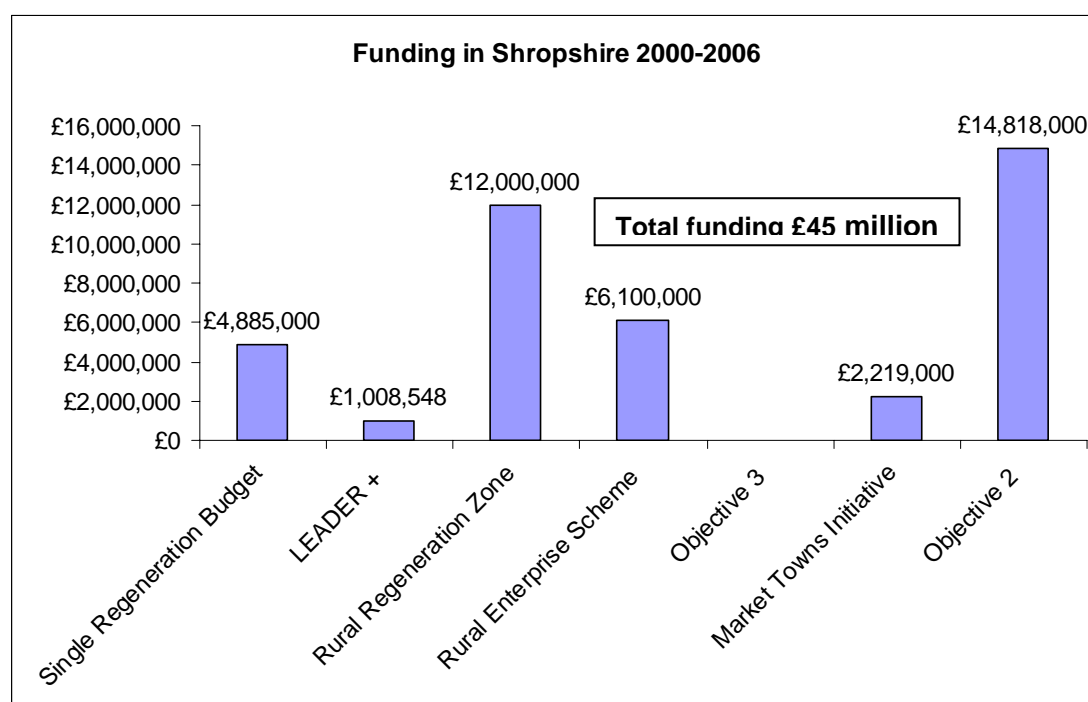
6. Action Plan – Sets out how the Partnership will deliver the recommendations and meet the objectives of the strategy.

The Funding and Programmes Group of Shropshire Partnership will be responsible for performance managing the delivery of the Action Plan and reporting on progress to the Partnership Management Group and the Public Services Board.

2 SETTING THE SCENE

2a Shropshire's Success to Date

Shropshire has already benefited significantly from a wide range of external funding sources. The following chart sets out the amount of external funding attracted to the county between April 2000 and March 2006 from Regional Development Agency and European programmes. Over the same period, Shropshire has averaged £8.3million per annum in Lottery grants. (Awaiting figures for Objective 3)



The funding highlighted above has supported a wide range of economic and social regeneration activities, for example new community centres, environmental enhancements, business park infrastructure, NVQ-level training, youth mentoring schemes and tourism attractions. Specific examples of activities supported with external funding are shown in the case studies at *Annex 1*.

The three Shropshire authorities that had Objective 2 (European) Strategic Packages (Bridgnorth, Oswestry and South Shropshire) received external funding through the packages to a value of around 5% of the Council Tax levied in those areas over the same period. Taking other external funding into account, such as the Rural Enterprise Scheme and Lottery programmes the figure would be nearer 10%, which is a significant supplement to the public spending budget.

However, it must be noted that much of the funding identified in the chart has had geographical limitations. Only certain parts, and indeed certain electoral wards, are eligible to apply for some of the funding streams. The main funding sources over this period and their eligible areas are shown at *Annex 2*.

2b Changes to the Funding Environment

The external funding arena in the West Midlands is going through a period of major change. There will be significantly less money available from Europe, following the accession of new member states, and consequently greater competition for funding

through other programmes.

The main drivers for change are:

- The review of the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies:
 - o Will dictate the future shape of Regional Development Agency (Advantage West Midlands) programmes, including Regeneration Zones, Clusters and Hi-tech Corridors, and strategic interventions
 - o Consultations on final drafts will run May to June 2007
- A new programme, the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Programme, replacing Objective 2 in the region will commence in 2007.
 - o It carries 50% less funding than the current programme
 - o The focus areas for the new fund are 1) Promoting Innovation, Research and Development, 2) Stimulating Enterprise Development, 3) Achieving Sustainable Urban Development, 4) Developing Transnational Activity
 - o Theoretically, the programme covers all of the West Midlands, but the main infrastructure priority (3) is likely to apply to urban areas only
 - o Rural areas such as Shropshire will have to battle very hard to receive a share
- Other European programmes will also begin in 2007:
 - o Rural Development Programme England – Managed by Advantage West Midlands, approximately £3.1 million/annum will be available regionally for the diversification of the rural economy. This is significantly less than was available in the previous programme (ERDP) and sectors eligible to receive funding are very specific.
 - o Trans-national Funding (supporting projects that involve joint delivery and co-operation by partners from more than one nation), including Culture 2007, Lifelong Learning Programme, Framework Programme 7 and the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme
- Changing Lottery funding priorities:
 - o The current Big Lottery Fund programmes run from 2006 to 2009 and support a number of areas including young people, advice services, community buildings, voluntary sector infrastructure and healthy living. There has already been a number of changes to bidding deadlines and programme guidelines that have disadvantaged Shropshire projects
 - o There could be less money for regional projects post 2009 as funding is vired to 2012 Olympic developments
- The City Regions agenda:
 - o Has an implication on the distribution of external funding. Already, the local authorities developing the West Midlands City Region have gained LSC funding for research work that may lead to additional external funding for future work on learning and skills

3 REGIONAL REPRESENTATION

This section addresses the following objective:

- Influencing Government and other funders for the benefit of Shropshire

3a Numerous regional and sub-regional groups are involved in the targeting and subsequent delivery of Government and European funding in the West Midlands. Decisions made by these groups fundamentally affect the amount of external funding Shropshire might access and receive.

Such groups are involved in the development of key strategies such as those covered in Section 2b that will inform how the region will target and spend external funding in the future.

It is vital that Shropshire has a robust and co-ordinated response to this regional activity. This would be greatly enhanced by a regular presence on appropriate groups, so that we can:

- Influence regional policy and investment decisions
- Stay informed of the latest developments and opportunities
- Raise the profile of Shropshire's issues and priorities at the regional table

3b A questionnaire on regional representation was carried out in December 2006 amongst members of Shropshire Partnership's Funding and Programmes Group and Economic Development Forum.

The following key findings from the survey have guided the actions proposed in this Strategy:

- Many respondents were unable to identify Shropshire's representatives on senior-level regional groups.
- Knowledge of regional groups varied greatly
- Shropshire partners have little connection with the regional AWM Cluster Groups
- Respondents supported the introduction of a Code of Conduct for Shropshire representatives on regional groups.

A mapping of Shropshire representation on relevant regional and sub regional groups was undertaken in parallel to the questionnaire. The results are shown at *Annex 3*.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that Shropshire representatives know what issues to raise on behalf of the Partnership and partners
- Produce a code of conduct to advise on how to feedback to partners
- Identify Shropshire or Shire representatives from Groups to have the responsibility of formally updating the wider partnership on meeting outcomes (could rotate annually) through a simple reporting pro-forma
- Maintain a current list of partnership representatives / lead officers for circulation to partnership groups and beyond
- Consider what programmes are likely to provide the best opportunities for Shropshire and invest time and resources accordingly.

4 Maximising External Funding

The examples shown in the case studies at Annex 1 show some of the successes Shropshire has had in recent years.

If we are to build on these successes, Shropshire needs to work even harder and more collectively as programmes become more competitive.

This section shows in detail how we will become smarter throughout Shropshire Partnership in securing and delivering external funding.

This section address the following objectives:

- Maximise the amount of external funding entering Shropshire
- Increase the percentage of successful applications
- Reduce duplication of effort
- Improve efficiency and manage resources better
- Enhance the delivery of projects and programmes
- Build on the collective knowledge and expertise in the external funding field

4a **Identifying Funding Opportunities**

Several partners have access to and expertise in using grant-finding databases, which provide up-to-date information on external funding opportunities. Currently, the County Council's Economic Regeneration Team provides a monthly update on funding opportunities that goes to all partners through the Funding and Programmes Group and some voluntary and community groups. We need to build on this to better co-ordinate information sharing, promotion and communications across the county.

Recommendations:

- Identify and promote partner organisations with access to and expertise in grant-finding information.
- Explore the possibility of hosting an internet-based grant-finding service through the Partnership's website.
- Produce an e newsletter to share information on new funding opportunities, both local and national, to replace the current External Funding Update.
- Nominate an external funding expert to be assigned to support each LAA Block Group. This will be a two-way communication role to help identify funding opportunities for the delivery of priorities, in each block, and to formally feedback to the Funding and Programmes group on progress and projects/ideas in order to promote joined up working between sectors and blocks.
- Representatives on Regional groups should formally feedback (as identified in code of conduct) funding opportunities/information to the Funding and Programmes Group for dissemination.

4b **Developing high quality applications**

Securing external funding is often a competitive process, which means that co-ordination amongst partners across Shropshire may not always be appropriate or possible. However, sharing information on projects and applications does have a number of benefits. It could:

- Foster more joint bids / partnership projects
- Provide access to advice for bid-writers
- Allow the Partnership to monitor activity relating to the delivery of its priorities
- Reduce the instances of conflicting or duplicate applications

Currently, there is no formal system for capturing information on partners' planned projects or successful bids. The Funding and Programmes Group is the ideal conduit for capturing such Shropshire-wide activity. There is considerable expertise within this Group and it should be utilised to greatest effect, to share best practice for the benefit of the county.

Proposals that emanate from the Group will be referred to LSP delivery groups, including the LAA Block Groups and the Economic Development Forum, for further consideration.

Nominated lead officers from the Funding & Programmes will advise the LAA Block Groups on funding opportunities that might support LAA-related activity. The Block Groups will also seek advice from these lead officers on developing funding applications when directly commissioning projects.

Recommendations:

- Develop a database of partner funding experts in Shropshire for support, advice and mentoring to others
- Investigate systems for monitoring partner bids
- Identify funding streams, project ideas and proposals that may contribute to LAA targets and refer to the Block Groups for further discussion

4c Delivery and management of externally funded projects and programmes

Successful delivery and management of externally funded projects and programmes requires experience and professional skills. Poor management and delivery is a risk to any organisation, due to the very real potential of claw back for poor performance or inadequate management control.

Additionally, for councils, the Comprehensive Performance Assessment monitors the approach to the management of external funding. To achieve a level 4 (of 4) rating, a council must be able to demonstrate that '*External funding has been successfully used to address local priorities resulting in sustained improvements and greater long-term value for money*'.

For voluntary organisations, securing funding can be essential to their survival.

Therefore, it is important for partner organisations and their staff to recognise

- The level of resources needed to deliver a funded project
- The roles and responsibilities of personnel involved
- The procedures and systems required for monitoring and reporting

A number of organisations across England, including some within Shropshire have developed External Funding Codes of Practice to maximise the benefits and minimise the risks associated with external funding. All partners will be encouraged to develop their own codes with support from the County Council's Economic Regeneration Team.

Recommendations:

- Partner organisations should consider adopting an External Funding Code of Practice appropriate to their organisation.
- Funding & Programmes Group to provide networking opportunities for project officers and others involved in the delivery and management of external funding.
- Training needs of project officers identified and local delivery procured.
- Projects and programmes should be managed utilising Prince II techniques.

4d Monitoring Performance and Evaluation

As in all areas of public spending, the management and use of external funding is open to scrutiny. Through the implementation of the monitoring systems and codes of practice already mentioned, the Partnership will be better informed about what is being achieved through external funding in Shropshire. This will be useful information both to partners and funders.

Additionally, the data collected will provide an evidence base that future grant applications could draw on.

Recommendations:

- Annual feedback from partners to the Funding & Programmes Group on the amount and source of external funding secured by their organisation
- Undertake objective evaluations of activity utilising expertise from within the Partnership

4e Knowledge Transfer

As already stated, there is a vast amount of good practice across Shropshire. The difficulty is always making all partners aware of what others are doing.

Better networking, celebrations and mentoring are all ways to improve communications within Shropshire and beyond.

Recommendations:

- Funding & Programmes Group to actively disseminate best practice
- An annual networking and celebratory event for all partners
- Build stronger connections with RegenWM, the West Midlands organisation that promotes excellence in regeneration

5 CONCLUSION

Shropshire has a good record in attracting and managing external funding. In many parts of the county and in many partner organisations there is considerable expertise, enthusiasm and experience.

Shropshire Partnership needs to build on these strong foundations by co-ordinating the county's involvement in regional groups and helping to strengthen the capacity of partners to adapt to the changing external funding arena.

Moreover, the Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement provide a strong platform from which to lobby funders for additional resources to implement our vision and priorities. To achieve this, however, the Partnership needs to be even more

proactive in developing project ideas and alerting partners to external funding opportunities.

The following Action Plan sets out a series of recommendations on how the Partnership will deliver the objectives of the strategy.

**Shropshire Partnership
External Funding Strategy**

Action Plan

Objective – Influence Government and other funders for the benefit of Shropshire

	Recommendations	Key Tasks	Timescale	Lead Group / Officer
1	Seek Shropshire representation on the European & International Affairs Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise at SRG - Explore process for gaining membership to the Group - Identify potential Shropshire / sub-regional representative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4th April SRG - Potentially at May PSB 	TBC
2	Explore representation on Trans-national working groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review current membership on trans-national working groups - Assess value of continued involvement in specific trans-national programmes (suggest joint meeting of SRG & F&P) - Develop strategic approach to trans-national funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By April SRG - TBC 	F&P
3	Explore the need for greater dialogue with regional universities around Trans-national programmes, including FP7, CIP and Lifelong Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take forward with above 		
4	Ensure representatives know what issues to raise on behalf of the Partnership and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain calendar of meetings - Forward meeting agendas to wider mailing groups - Collate issues and pass on to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From June (pending adoption of code of conduct) 	Economic Regeneration Team (ERT)

		meeting reps		
5	Produce a code of conduct, which advises on how representatives should represent the partnership at regional meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eco Regeneration Team to produce code of conduct - Adoption by Management Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft April - 24th May meeting 	ERT
6	Identify a lead officer from each regional group to have the responsibility of formally updating the wider partnership on meeting outcomes (could rotate annually) through a simple reporting pro-forma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify lead officer - Develop pro-forma (ERT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take forward with 4&5. - Take pro-forma to May meeting 	ERT & LSP Team
7	Maintain a current list of partnership representatives / lead officers for circulation to partnership groups and beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update Annex 3 quarterly 		ERT

Objective – Maximising External Funding Entering Shropshire

	Recommendations	Key Tasks	Timescale	Lead Group / Officer
8	Identify and promote partner organisations with access to and expertise in grant-finding information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-promote the Grantfinder service to communities and partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote at Regenerating Shropshire event in June 	ERT
9	Explore the possibility of hosting an internet-based grant-finding service through the Partnership's website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up working group of partners to look at options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting after March f&p meeting 	ERT

10	Produce an e newsletter to share information on new funding opportunities, both local and national, to replace the current External Funding Update.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop proposal paper for e newsletter - Agree format - Issue bi-monthly publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - March F&P meeting - At March meeting - From May 07 	F&P (nominations from partners)
11	Nominate an external funding expert to be assigned to support each LAA Block Group. This will be a two-way communication role to help identify funding opportunities for the delivery of priorities, in each block, and to formally feedback to the Funding and Programmes group on progress and projects/ideas in order to promote joined up working between sectors and blocks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussions with F&P and LAA block groups to agree procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - April Block meetings 	LSP Team

Objective – Increase the percentage of successful applications

	Recommendations	Key Tasks	Timescale	Lead Group / Officer
12	Develop a database of partner funding experts in Shropshire for support, advice and mentoring to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop questionnaire to identify expertise - Map results - Build database 	<p>By April 07</p> <p>May 07</p> <p>May 07 – June 07</p>	F&P
13	Investigate systems for monitoring partners' bids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise demonstration of Grant tracker monitoring system for partners - Discuss next steps 	<p>May 07</p> <p>At May F&P meeting</p>	F&P

14	Identify project ideas and proposals that may contribute to LAA targets and refer to the Block Groups for further discussion	- Take forward with 11	June onwards Processes from October	LSP
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Objective – Enhance the delivery of projects and programmes

	Recommendations	Key Tasks	Timescale	Lead Group / Officer
15	Partner organisations should adopt an External Funding Code of Practice appropriate to their organisation.	- ERT to develop code of practice template - Partners to voluntarily develop individual codes	- By April 07	ERT and LSP
16	Funding & Programmes Group to provide networking opportunities for project officers and others involved in the delivery and management of external funding.	- Arrange calendar of networking and information sessions, either through F&P meetings or separate events	- March onwards	F&P
17	Training needs of project officers identified and local delivery procured.	- Taken forward with Action 13	- April onwards	F&P
18	Projects and programmes are managed utilising Prince II techniques.	- Taken forward with Action 13	- April 07 onwards	F&P

Objective – Build on the collective knowledge and expertise in the external funding field

	Recommendations	Key Tasks	Timescale	Lead Group / Officer
19	Annual feedback from partners to the Funding & Programmes Group on the amount and source of external funding secured.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion dependant on action 14 - Explore CIPFA 	TBC	F&P
20	Sharing resources to undertake objective evaluations of activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take forward with 12 		F&P
21	Funding & Programmes Group to actively disseminate best practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce discussion paper for F&P - Explore options for dissemination - Roll out format for dissemination 	For May 07 meeting (linked to	ERT
22	Hold an annual networking and celebratory event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss at F&P - Organise event - Hold event 	For March 07 meeting From March 07 June 07?	ERT
23	Build stronger connections with RegenWM.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce discussion paper for F&P Group - Carry forward agreed actions 	For May 07 meeting Implement actions by August 07	ERT

Annex 1 – Case Studies

Highley

Highley is a small and relatively isolated community to the south of Bridgnorth with some 3,300 residents. Until recently, the village had been struggling with poor economic and social conditions, a legacy of the closure of the coalmine in 1969, and years of under-investment.

In 1996, Highley had a run-down community sports and leisure facility in the Miners' Welfare Ground, little or no provision for visitors of the village, poor quality amenities, neglected public realm and poor quality housing.

Ten years on, Highley is a desirable place to live, work and visit. The difference has been made through a number of transformational projects, both small and large. External funding of approximately £10 million has financed these projects from a number of public sources, including Bridgnorth District Council, Advantage West Midlands, Single Regeneration Budget, English Heritage, European Regional Development Fund, National Lottery, (Sport England, New Opportunities Fund, Big Lottery Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund), Shropshire County Council, the Department of Trade & Industry, and SITA Environmental Trust. The common thread running through these projects has been the foresight and determination of the local community, which has come together and been a catalyst for positive change.

There are two major projects in the village:

1. The Severn Centre - a £3.5 million multi-use community centre completed in 2004. The Centre has a wide a range of facilities including a community hall, sports hall, childcare, police station, children's play areas, library, fitness suite as well as outdoor sports amenities including multi-use games area, bowling green, swimming pool and soccer/cricket pitches.
2. The Engine House - a new £4.75 million visitor attraction for the Severn Valley Railway near Highley station. This innovative building was started in 2006 and will be completed by summer 2007.

Besides these major investments, there have been many smaller initiatives providing a bond to keep the regeneration of the village firmly founded in the community, addressing their needs, and making their dreams become reality. These projects include:

- a. Discovery Trail – a village history trail with unique sculptures including “A Song of Steam Trains” designed by children from the village primary school and bronze marker plaques designed with the help of the local community
- b. Summer Pride – project to improve the streetscape through planting and floral displays
- c. Public art – Highley Clock Tower which has a mining theme to commemorate the previous importance of mining in the area
- d. New England – preservation of historic features including the Donkey Bridge, an attractive early 18th century twin-arched Packhorse Bridge, and restoration of an ancient woodland.
- e. Streetscape Enhancement – a Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme to improve the shop fronts and frontages of historic buildings in the conservation area

- f. Walking Leaflets, which lead people on interesting walks in the vicinity with suitable interpretation of places of interest
- g. Gating the Streets – project to reduce anti-social behaviour in the ‘back-to-back’ terraced streets in the centre of the village
- h. Village centre enhancement works including traffic calming, high quality paving and sympathetic street furniture

“The village is now a vibrant and forward-looking community”, a quote from the village web site www.highley.org.uk in October 2006.

South Shropshire

South Shropshire is the most Rurally Isolated of all Shropshire's Districts.

It has a total population of 42,000 spread over an area of 400sqm. Roughly half the population live in one of the 5 small market towns in the district: Ludlow [10,000], Church Stretton [4,000], Craven Arms [2,500], Cleobury Mortimer [2,000] and Bishop's Castle [2,000]. Each Market Town has its own Market Town Regeneration Partnership.

Through the development of these market town partnerships, South Shropshire has embraced the use of external funding for the betterment of its own communities.

For example, Burford a large village in Shropshire but connected to Tenbury Wells in Worcestershire has been the focus for major economic regeneration with the development of the Aspire Centre and the Teme Business Park.



The Aspire Centre total capital cost of £2m well over $\frac{3}{4}$ of which came from external funders such as SRB, Rural Challenge English Partnerships, RDP, Objective 2

Bishop's Castle, has focused its regeneration efforts on Enterprise House a mixed community and economic regeneration venture.

Enterprise House one of the flagship projects of the £1m Rural Challenge Programme (1995-1998).



Craven Arms has undergone a total transformation thanks to around £10m investment from external sources including the completion of the Discovery Centre and the Auction Yard as well as a visual enhancement of the whole town and an expansion of the Craven Arms Business Park.

Additionally, 11 Broadplaces (community broadband access facilities) have been created in South Shropshire through Shropshire County Council's Switch on Shropshire initiative, representing £250,000 in external funding investment.



Shropshire Partnership Funding Strategy

Annex 2

Summary of Programmes

1. Existing Programmes

Title	Source	Description	Lifespan
Rural Regeneration Zone	Advantage West Midlands	Covering parts of Shropshire (excluding Shrewsbury Town, Whitchurch and Market Drayton), Herefordshire and Worcester, the Rural Regeneration Zone is a Key Delivery Mechanism of the Regional Economic Strategy and provides a focus for a significant element of Advantage West Midlands investment in Shropshire.	2002 Onwards
Single Regeneration Budget	Advantage West Midlands	<p>Central Government established the Single Regeneration Budget in the early 1990s to make it more responsive to local regeneration needs. The sixth and final round of SRB commenced in 2000.</p> <p>Shropshire benefited from two SRB programmes that both ended in March 2006. SPARKS, covering Oswestry, North Shrewsbury and Highley, and Rosebud covering wards in Ludlow and Craven Arms.</p>	2000 – 2006 (Round 6)
LEADER +	Europe	<p>LEADER + is a European Community Initiative for assisting rural communities in improving the quality of life and economic prosperity of their local area.</p> <p>The LEADER approach encourages and supports rural communities in thinking about the longer-term potential of their area. The Northern Marches Local Action Group, made up public, private and voluntary sector partners, deliver and implement their strategy for integrated rural development, supporting community projects in Oswestry and North Shropshire. As a cross border programme, the</p>	2000 - 2006

		Accountable Body is Chester City Council.	
Rural Enterprise Scheme (part of the England Rural Development Plan)	Europe	<p>The Rural Enterprise Scheme (RES) was established through the European Union Agenda 2000 reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy.</p> <p>The RES represented the main instrument through which farmers could be helped to adjust or adapt their businesses in order to take advantage of changing market demands and business opportunities. It did so by aiding a range of activities including farm diversification, marketing of quality agricultural produce, and tourism and craft activities.</p> <p>It also had a broader role in supporting the rural heritage and environment (where it falls outside the scope of other European programmes, and helping rural communities to thrive by providing assistance for small-scale community-based projects not covered by other mainstream Government support.</p>	2000 – 2006 (with legacy projects to 2008)
Objective 2	Europe	<p>Obj. 2 is a European Union funded transformational programme that aims to narrow the gap between rich and poor areas of member states. It supports three strategic packages in Shropshire that concentrate on improving the capital infrastructure of lagging areas. Other measures targets specific business sectors such as tourism and community enterprise.</p> <p>It also supported three action plans (delegated grant schemes) around Creative Industries, Tourism and Community Regeneration managed by the County Council</p>	2000 – 2008
Lottery Programmes	National Lottery (regarded as public funding)	A range of lottery programmes has benefited Shropshire, including those distributed by the Big Lottery Fund (a merger of the New Opportunities Fund and Communities Fund), Awards for All, the Millennium Commission and the Heritage Lottery Fund.	1995 onwards

		Over the last year, the Big Lottery Fund has launched a range of new programmes for the period 2006 – 2009. These include Community Buildings, Advice Plus, Children’s Play, Young People’s Fund and Reaching Communities amongst others. In addition, Awards for All, the small community project fund, now has a maximum ceiling of £10k.	
Objective 3	Europe	<p>Objective 3 comes through the European Social Fund and supports learning and skills policies and programmes outlined in the Government National Action Plan for Employment.</p> <p>It contributes towards national approaches to, welfare reform, active labour market measures for unemployed people, life-long learning, and adaptability and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>In the West Midlands, much of the funding came through LSC and Jobcentre plus co-financed programmes.</p>	2000 - 2006
Market Towns Initiative	Advantage West Midlands	<p>A Countryside Agency initiative that encouraged market towns to develop town partnerships, undertake health checks and agree action plans for town improvements.</p> <p>A number of towns in the programme gained funding from AWM to deliver actions contained in their plans. Towns involved in the initiative included Market Drayton, Ellesmere, Whitchurch, Cleobury Mortimer, Ludlow, Craven Arms, Oswestry and Wem.</p>	2002 - 2007

2. New Programmes

Title	Source	Description	Lifespan
Regional Competitiveness and Employment	Europe	<p>RCE replaces Obj. 2 and Obj. 3 in the West Midlands as the major new European programme. The focus areas for the new fund are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Promoting Innovation, Research and Development – focusing on health & medical technologies, energy, digital media and ICT, transport technologies and nano-technology 2) Stimulating Enterprise Development – focusing on the 10 business clusters identified in the current RES 3) Achieving Sustainable Urban Development – to address significant concentrations of economic need and seek to generate major employment opportunities 4) Developing Transnational Activity – a small measure to embed trans-national working within the scheme <p>The regional will benefit from £400 million through the European Regional Development Fund element of RCE and £372 million through the European Social Fund element of RCE.</p> <p>The programme's consultation period will continue to March 2007, so it is still subject to revision.</p>	2007 - 2013
Rural Development Programme for England	Europe	<p>RDPE replaces the England Rural Development Programme and sets out to achieve similar aims. The programme comprises 4 axes, Axis 2 concerns agri-environmental schemes, such as countryside stewardships, and will be managed nationally.</p> <p>Each region has developed its own Implementation Plan (RIP) for the other axes.</p>	2007 – 2013

		<p>The West Midlands' RIP concentrates on the specific sectors of Environmental Technology, Food and Drink and Tourism as well as social and community priorities. Axis 1 (Improving competitiveness of agriculture) funding will be split 50/50 between ET and F&D and Axis 3 (Improving quality of life and encouraging rural diversification) will be split mainly across the tourism and social and community priorities. It is estimated that the region will have an annual budget of 2.2 million for Axis 1 and 1.2 million for Axis 3.</p> <p>The Axis 4 budget (that which relates to the LEADER) will be used to develop a LEADER approach to the delivery of the other axes (through Rural Hubs)</p> <p>The programme is still being debated nationally, particularly in respect of how the regions propose to deliver Axis 4 (LEADER), so the RIP is subject to change.</p>	
Trans-national Programmes:			
Integrate Action Programme – Lifelong Learning	Europe	<p>This is Europe's first single programme to cover all learning opportunities from childhood to old age. It comprises of the following four pillars:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comenius - addressing the teaching and learning needs of all those in pre- school and school education 2. Erasmus - addressing the teaching and learning needs of all those in formal higher education 3. Leonardo da Vinci - addressing the teaching and learning needs of all those in vocational education and training 	2007 - 2013

		<p>4. Grundtvig - addressing the teaching and learning needs of those in all forms of adult education</p> <p>The four pillars are complemented by the new Jean Monnet Programme, which supports institutions and activities in the field of European integration.</p>	
Culture 2007	Europe	<p>The programmes objectives are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. promote the transnational mobility of cultural players 2. encourage the transnational circulation of works and cultural and artistic products 3. encourage intercultural dialogue 	2007-2013
Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme	Europe	<p>The CIP has the following objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To foster the competitiveness of enterprises and in particular SMEs 2. To promote all forms of innovation, including eco-innovation 3. To accelerate the development of a sustainable, competitive, innovative and inclusive Information Society 4. To promote energy efficiency and new and renewable energy sources in all sectors, including transport <p>These objectives will be pursued through the implementation of three specific Programmes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enterprise and Innovation Programme 2. ICT Policy Support Programme 3. Intelligent Energy-Europe Programme <p>Activities supported by these will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community financial instruments for SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises); 	2007-2013

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• networks bringing together a variety of stakeholders;• pilot projects, market replication, projects and other measures to support the take-up of innovation;• policy analyses, development and coordination with participating countries;• information sharing, dissemination and awareness raising;• support to joint actions of Member States of regions;• procurement based on technical specifications elaborated in cooperation with the Member States;• twinning between authorities at national and regional level.	
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Group	Designation	Frequency	Role	Shropshire Representatives as of 01/01/07
Lottery Officers Forum	Regional	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of lottery investment within West Midlands local authorities and communities 	(Regular attendees) Ben Walker (Bridgnorth District Council) Gary Spence or Joe Bubb (Shropshire County Council) Dave Hives (South Shropshire District Council (Vice Chair of Group)) Sheena Lucas (West Mercia Police)
Funding & Programmes Group	Countywide	Bi-monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To function as a forum where Shropshire Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) partners can exchange information and lessons from practice relating to regeneration policy, opportunities and delivery; To provide the LSP and its partners with a specialist viewpoint on funding and programmes through which it can influence and inform their decision-making processes; To assist the LSP and its partners with securing external funding opportunities for Shropshire that help achieve Local Area Agreement and Community Strategy priorities. 	All LSP partner organisations are invited to send one representative. Chair is Sam Hine (South Shropshire District Council and currently seconded for three days p/w at Shropshire County Council as acting Head of Economic Regeneration) The lead officer is Gary Spence (Shropshire County Council, Economic Regeneration)
Sub-Regional Group	Sub-regional	Bi-monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To take a strategic sub-regional view of the Obj.2, Obj.3 and trans-national programmes To initiate joint remedial action where projects fail to deliver and, 	Subject to review with the changing programmes, but currently councils with Obj. 2 packages, SCC technical assistance and action plans, the LSC and Business Link

			<p>in the case of Obj.2 and 3 projects, to recommend approval, rejection or deferment to the PMC Executive Sub Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage bids in areas where there is an outstanding strategic need. 	
Rural Regeneration Zone Board	Sub-regional	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve a Zone Implementation Plan for a 3-year rolling period to be submitted annually to the Agency identifying key themes and projects to deliver the Zone Strategy. This will include specific targets for Zone outputs and outcomes To commission and endorse general project themes and activities to deliver the Plan To ensure that strategic interventions connect in and add value to the ongoing work of the LSPs; helping to coordinate and align economic, social and environmental regeneration activity in the Zone area. To review and report on the effectiveness of the strategic interventions approved and endorsed to Local Strategic Partnerships 	<p>(There are two reps per County and two independent reps, including the Chair)</p> <p>Carolyn Downs (Chief Executive, Shropshire County Council)</p> <p>Sharon Gray (S/H/W LSC)</p> <p>(Christine Jones, Chief Executive, Business Link West Mercia represents Herefordshire)</p>
Tourism & Leisure Cluster Operation Group (COG)	Regional		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To determine the strategic priorities for the industries in the cluster and to advise Advantage 	
Food & Drink COG	Regional			Karen Davies (CE, Heart of England Fine

			West Midlands on project applications	Foods)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prepare a three-year plan for their cluster and quantify, in terms of key performance indicators, the outcomes of investment through Cluster funding. 	Simon Drake (Director of Business Services, Business Link West Mercia) Sharon Gray (S/H/W LSC) No specific Shropshire representation
Medical Technologies COG	Regional			Not represented
High-Value Added Products COG	Regional			Roger Belham , Managing Director, Contract Furniture (Whitchurch)
Environmental Technologies COG	Regional			Greenfinch Ltd, Rapra Ltd and Enviros are represented
Regional Assembly	Regional		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional planning strategy (RSS) Advocacy and policy development - the voice of the region to Whitehall and European institutions Accountability - scrutinising the work of Regional Development Agencies Main Policy areas include planning, transport, housing, the environment, sustainable development, rural issues, culture, health and equalities 	Cllr Malcolm Pate Cllr Peter Phillips Cllr Alan Mosley
European and International Affairs Partnership	Regional		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of the group is to provide the West Midlands with the means for agreeing a single, coherent cross sector voice on European policy issues of importance within the region. It also provides wider policy context for the work of West Midlands 	Currently no Shropshire representation

			<p>partners and the West Midlands in Europe office in Brussels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out the region's European agenda and priorities 	
<p>West Midlands Rural Affairs Forum (Acts as an independent advisor to the Regional Assembly on rural matters)</p>	Regional		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rural Affairs Forum acts as a sounding board for rural practitioners and delivery agencies; reflecting the needs and aspirations of rural people • It provides direction, leadership and co-ordination in respect of the rural agenda; acts as a conduit for rural views and presents the West Midlands perspective on the national, regional and sub-regional rural agenda. • It is not a lobby group but an organisation that brings together the many diverse voices of the region so that, together, they can more powerfully understand the issues affecting it and make a case for the rural West Midlands. 	<p>Paul Shevlin (OBC representing LGA Chief Executives Group)</p> <p>Cllr Claude Bodenham (West Midlands Local Government Association)</p> <p>Clare Greener (Observer – Shropshire County Council)</p>
<p>Regional European International Officers Group (REIOG) (reports to the European and International Affairs Partnership)</p>	Regional		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authority groups that supports the partnership and advises on wider European agenda 	<p>Paula Rogers (Shropshire County Council)</p>
<p>Regional European Funding and Policy Group (REFPG) (Reports to the European and International Affairs Partnership)</p>	Regional		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group's focus is European funding and European policy related to funding. In particular, it seeks to make the case externally for more European funding for the 	<p>Paula Rogers (Shropshire County Council)</p>

			<p>region and seeks to make the case internally for organisations to maximise their uptake of available opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group is open within reason to all organisations with the region with an interest in accessing EU funds or in ensuring future funds are available for the region 	
European Rural Group	Regional		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Group exists to give the region a reference point for European rural policy issues. It is a small working group, established to support the Rural Affairs Forum and Regional European Policy and Funding Forum The focal point for building links with a network of European regions who have similar characteristics and interests to the West Midlands and to propose a way forward A reference point for developing bids to European funds which look to address rural development needs in the region. 	Clare Greener (Shropshire County Council)
Inter Regional European Rural Group			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considers trans-national working, including PURPLE, RuriPolitan and FP7 Further details to be sought 	Paul Nash (Shropshire County Council)
Research and Technology Development Group			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considers Framework Programme 7 and the Competitiveness and Innovation 	Paul Nash (Shropshire County Council)

			Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further details to be sought 	
European Trans-national Co-operation Group			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A newly formed group that looks at the Trans-national Co-operation Programme • Further details to be sought 	Paul Nash (Shropshire County Council)